

Message Text

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14

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 SAM-01 IO-10 ACDA-05 MC-02 /088 W

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R 040727Z NOV 75

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2490

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 1111

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: FURTHER STEPS BY GOI TO REDUCE ITS INTERNATIONAL ISOLATION

1. SUMMARY: THE IRAQI REGIME CONTINUES ITS EFFORTS TO REDUCE ITS INTERNATIONAL ISOLATION BY RECEIVING A STREAM OF FOREIGN DIGNITARIES, INCLUDING GOVERNOR WALLER OF MISSISSIPPI, AND BY MODERATING ITS ATTACKS ON THE SYRIAN REGIME. HOPEFULLY, THE APPARENT DESIRE TO IMPROVE ITS INTERNATIONAL IMAGE WILL ALSO MODERATE THE REGIMES PAST PRACTICES OF COVERT MEDDLING IN THE AFFAIRS OF OTHER STATES. END SUMMARY.

2. THE IRAQI REGIMES CALCULATED POLICY OF REDUCING ITS INTERNATIONAL ISOLATION EVOLVED FURTHER IN RECENT WEEKS. VICE PRESIDENT SADDAM HUSSEIN MADE AN UNPRECEDENTED AND WELL
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PUBLICIZED CALL AT THE IRANIAN EMBASSY DURING THE IRANIAN

NATIONAL

DAY RECEPTION ON OCTOBER 27. LEST ANYONE MISS THE POINT, THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND OTHER ASSORTED TOP LEVEL OFFICIALS ALSO ATTENDED. SINCE EMBASSY NATIONAL DAY RECEPTIONS IN BAGHDAD ARE SELDOM VISITED BY HIGHER RANKING GOI OFFICIALS, THE IMPRESSIVE TURNOUT WAS A CLEAR SIGNAL OF THE REGIMES DESIRE FOR GOOD RELATIONS WITH IRAN. WE HAVE ALSO HEARD RUMORS THAT IRAQI AND IRANIAN DIPLOMATS NOW MEETING AT A RESORT HOTEL IN NORTHERN IRAQ HAVE REACHED AGREEMENT ON THE DETAILS OF NEW ARRANGEMENTS TO FACILITATE TRAVEL BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AS CALLED FOR IN THEIR RECENT ACCORD.

3. THE TREATMENT ACCORDED TO VISITING MISSISSIPPI GOVERNOR WALLER IS ANOTHER INDICATION OF THE REGIMES DESIRE TO REDUCE ITS INTERNATIONAL ISOLATION. UNLIKE HIS LAST VISIT LAST APRIL, WALLER AND PARTY WERE GIVEN VIP TREATMENT AT BAGHDAD AIRPORT INCLUDING THE USE OF THE VIP LOUNGE. HIS FIRST MEETING THE NEXT MORNING WAS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER HAMADI, A CALL THAT WAS DULY NOTED IN THE BAGHDAD PRESS COMPLETE WITH PICTURES. AFTER THIS INITIAL CALL THE GOVERNOR MET WITH A SERIES OF HIGH LEVEL OFFICIALS AND IS NOW QUITE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR MISSISSIPPI BUSINESS FIRMS IN IRAQ. THE ONLY SOUR NOTE DURING THE GOVERNOR'S CALLS WAS A REFERENCE BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER TO THE POSSIBLE SALE OF PERSHING MISSILES TO ISRAEL. THE FOREIGN MINISTER POINTED OUT THAT THESE MISSILES COULD BE FIRED ON BAGHDAD FROM INSIDE ISRAELI TERRITORY AND WONDERED IF USG PROMISES TO ISRAEL CONCERNING THE PERSHING WERE CONSISTENT WITH MPE USG'S STATED DESIRE FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THE FOREIGN MINISTER ALSO REFERRED TO A PRO-ISRAELI BIAS IN THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVERNOR COULD PLAY A ROLE IN CORRECTING THIS. THE GOVERNOR RESPONDED BY OFFERING TO SERVE AS A MESSWJE CARRIER TO THE USG OFFICIALS, BUT AVOIDED ANY COMMITMENT TO BECOME AN ADVOCATE OF THE ARAB CAUSE.

4. AS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF ITS DESIRE TO REDUCE ITS INTERNATIONAL ISOLATION, THE GOI RECEIVED THE CHAIRMAN OF THE POLISH STATE COUNCIL, HENRY K. JABLONSKI ON OCT. 20, TUNISIAN PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA ON OCT. 26, AND BAHRAIN PRIME MINISTER
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KHALIFA ON NOV. 1.

5. EVEN RELATIONS WITH THE DETESTED SYRIAN REGIME SEEM ON THE UPSWING WITH RELATIVELY LITTLE ANTI-SYRIAN COMMENTARY APPEARING IN THE BAGHDAD PRESS OVER THE LAST MONTH. ON OCT. 29, PRESIDENT BAKR PUBLICLY REITERATED IRAQ'S CALL FOR A JOINT SYRIAN-IRAQI NORTHERN FRONT ON CONDITION, OF COURSE, THAT SYRIA ADOPT IRAQI POLICIES TOWARDS A SETTLEMENT.

6. COMMENT: IRAQ HAS MADE CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS IN ITS ATTEMPTS TO BROADEN ITS INTERNATIONAL CONTACTS. THE REGIME IS APPARENTLY FOCUSING ITS EFFORTS ON STRENGTHENING ITS ECONOMIC TIES WITH THE WEST AND ITS POLITICAL TIES WITH THE THIRD WORLD, PARTICULARLY ITS GEOGRAPHIC NEIGHBORS AND THE OTHER RIPARIANS OF THE GULF. HOPEFULLY, THESE TRENDS WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ATTEMPT BY THE REGIME TO IMPROVE ITS INTERNATIONAL IMAGE AND MAY EVEN LEAD TO A DECISION BY IRAQ'S LEADERS TO TONE DOWN THE COVERT MEDDLING IN THE AFFAIRS OF OTHER COUNTRIES THAT HAS GIVEN IRAQ SUCH A BAD REPUTATION IN RECENT YEARS.

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